

# ORATION

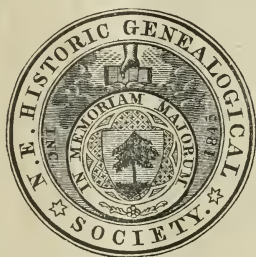
DELIVERED BEFORE THE

New-England Historic Genealogical Society,

APRIL 19, 1895,

TO COMMEMORATE ITS

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY.





*Members of the Society can exchange this pamphlet at No. 18 Somerset Street, Boston, for a copy of the work bound in cloth, by paying 50 cents for the binding.*



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By

CHARLES CARLETON COFFIN, A.M.

WITH ADDRESSES BY

WILLIAM CLAFLIN, LL.D., THE PRESIDENT; GEORGE F. HOAR, LL.D.,  
AND CURTIS GUILD, ESQ., AND A POEM BY OLIVER B. STEBBINS, ESQ.



BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.

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PRESS OF  
ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL  
BOSTON

By transfer

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## THE COMMEMORATION.

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At the stated meeting of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society, held on 6 December, 1893, on motion of Oliver Bliss Stebbins, Esq., it was

*Voted:* That the Council of the Society be requested to consider the expediency of, and, if deemed desirable, to propose to the Society, some plan for the celebration of the Society's jubilee, or fiftieth anniversary, which occurs sometime in the ensuing year.

The Council deemed it prudent to await the completion of the extension of the Society's building, 18 Somerset street, for which plans were already in preparation; but, that the proposition might not slumber, the Council, at its session on 2 April, 1894, on motion of John Ward Dean, A.M.,

*Voted:* That the Treasurer, David Greene Haskins, Jr., A.M., and the Secretary be a committee to consider the question of celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society.

At the session of the Council held on 31 December, 1894, this committee made a verbal report, when the Council added Messrs. Charles Carleton Coffin, A.M., and Capt. Albert Alonzo Folsom to the committee.

At the session of the Council in February, 1895, this committee reported:

That the Society celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of its incorporation, 18 March, 1845, by an oration at the Old South Meeting House in Boston, on 19 April, 1895.

That the Hon. Charles Carleton Coffin, A.M., be invited to deliver the oration.

That the Society appoint a committee, with full powers, to complete the arrangements, including invitations to the Governor of the Commonwealth and leading citizens, a dinner, and such other exercises as the committee may deem expedient.

This report the Council by unanimous vote accepted and adopted.

This action being reported to the Society, at its stated meeting, 6 February, 1895, it was accepted, and it was

*Voted:* To adopt the recommendation of the Council regarding the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Society's incorporation, except as to date, which is left to the determination of the committee.

*Voted:* That the Hon. Charles Carleton Coffin, A.M., be invited to deliver the oration.

*Voted:* That a committee of five be appointed, by the chair, to determine the day for the celebration, and to complete all necessary arrangements, with such other exercises as they may deem expedient.

The chair appointed as this committee Capt. Albert Alonzo Folsom, *Chairman*; Hon. Thomas Weston, A.M., Benjamin Barstow Torrey, Esq., Oliver Bliss Stebbins, Esq., Myles Standish, A.M., M.D.

The committee duly organized, completed its arrangements for commemorative exercises in accordance with the vote of the Council, and issued the following announcement:

NEW-ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY,

BOSTON, March 25, 1895.

*Mr.* \_\_\_\_\_

You are cordially invited to attend the Fiftieth Anniversary of the formation of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society, to be held at the Old South Meeting House (Washington street) on the 19th day of April, at ten o'clock.

Hon. Charles Carleton Coffin will give an address. Brief speeches may be expected by representatives of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Bostonian Society, the American Antiquarian Society, the Pilgrim Society of Plymouth, and others.



It is very desirable that all the resident members of the Society should be present upon this interesting anniversary.

The Committee of Arrangements hope to have the pleasure of seeing you upon that occasion.

ALBERT A. FOLSOM,  
THOMAS WESTON,  
BENJAMIN B. TORREY,  
OLIVER B. STEBBINS,  
MYLES STANDISH, M.D.,  
*Committee.*

The exercises in observance of this Commemoration were held in the Old South Meeting House, Boston, on the morning of Friday, 19 April, 1895, the Hon. William Claflin, Ex-Governor of Massachusetts and President of the Society, occupying the chair. On the platform with the President were seated the Rev. Alonzo Ames Miner, D.D., Chaplain of the day; the Hon. Charles Carleton Coffin, A.M., the Orator of the occasion; Oliver Bliss Stebbins, Esq., the Poet of the observances; Curtis Guild, Esq., President of the Bostonian Society; the Hon. George Frisbie Hoar, LL.D., Senator of the United States; Capt. Albert Alonzo Folsom, Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, and the Recording Secretary of the Society. In the large audience were many gentlemen and ladies distinguished as citizens in the fields of literature, art, politics, and religion.

The President in opening the exercises briefly rehearsed the work of the Society thus far in its career.

The Rev. Alonzo Ames Miner, D.D., invoked the divine blessing. The Hon. Charles Carleton Coffin, A.M., delivered the oration, and Oliver Bliss Stebbins, Esq., read a poem.

The Hon. George Frisbie Hoar presented the salutations of the American Antiquarian Society, in the absence of the Hon. Stephen Salisbury, its President; and Curtis Guild, Esq., President of the Bostonian Society, tendered the congratulations of that Society.

Letters were read from Charles Francis Adams, Esq., President of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Rev. Lucius

Robinson Paige, D.D. (now in his ninety-fourth year), the oldest member of the Society, and others, regretting their unavoidable absence.

At their conclusion, the President closed the meeting with an expression of congratulation on its success.

It was noteworthy that the speakers were all resident members of the Society.

GEO. A. GORDON,  
*Recording Secretary.*

## ADDRESS OF THE HON. WILLIAM CLAFLIN, LL.D.

*Gentlemen of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society :*

This Society was founded by men who felt a deep interest in history and genealogy, especially the history and genealogy of New England, which they thought should be preserved for public use now, and for all coming time. The Society began with small resources, and its members were few ; but they persevered in the work, conscious that the object was most worthy, and that, in time, the public would rally to its support. The labor has been arduous, and those who have long toiled in this labor have not sought pecuniary reward. They have performed their duty faithfully, as they loved the work. Most valuable services have been rendered by the various committees from year to year. They deserve and they receive the grateful thanks of the members who use the library in the Society's house or at their homes.

By slow degrees the Society's funds have increased, enabling it to secure a valuable and convenient location. More room was needed for the storage of books and for its public meetings, and to meet this end an addition was made the past year, affording facilities for both purposes for many years to come. The Council would have been glad to have covered all the estate, when making the change, if its funds would have justified the outlay.

I congratulate the Society upon the results of its labors. It can look with confidence to the future. Its work will constantly enlarge, and it is hoped that its members and friends will increase in proportion, enabling it to meet the demands of coming generations.

It seemed to the Council especially fitting and proper to hold its semi-centennial anniversary on this day, so sacred in the annals of American history. It is the purpose of the Society to keep alive the memory of the events which led to the



## ORATION.

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On the evening of Nov. 1, 1844, five gentlemen of this city organized themselves into a society for historical and genealogical research. The following spring they received an act of incorporation from the Commonwealth. On this Patriots' Day we commemorate that event.

The Society had small beginnings. The collection of material during the year 1845 consisted of twenty-four bound volumes, ten manuscripts, six plans, one old lease, four bound volumes of the "Independent Chronicle" newspaper, 1804-1811, one hundred and eighty-five pamphlets, and a wheelbarrow load of the sermons preached by the Rev. Dr. Joseph Eckley, pastor of the Old South Church. During the year thirty-seven gentlemen were enrolled as members.

The gentlemen who laid the foundations of this institution were animated by a lofty ideal. No pecuniary gain was to come to them. They could not hope to receive the applause of the multitude. Whatever effort they might make would be for others' benefit. Time and money given would be for those who might come after them. Their successors have been men of like character. From such small beginning the New-England Historic Genealogical Society has become the foremost of its kind in the Republic. It was founded with a noble purpose to make it in the highest sense a beneficent institution. Like the gospel of the New Testament, it was to bestow its blessings without money and without price. Its doors are wide open to all. The volumes upon its shelves are free to every one. Before the establishment of the present magnificent Public Library of this city, the library of this Society was open to the public in the spirit of Him who, eighteen centuries ago, said, "I am among you as one that serveth."

It has no endowment from commonwealth or city, no revenue from shareholders. It is sustained by individuals who annually contribute their moiety through their appreciation

of the value of such an institution to the public, and by funds established by those who gave liberally while living, or remembered it in their last wills and testaments. Two gentlemen have in that manner rendered great and conspicuous service: Marshall Pinckney Wilder, for many years our president, and William Blanchard Towne, for a long time our treasurer, through whose efforts liberal sums were obtained by subscription. During the last quarter of a century \$45,125 have been given for a building fund, and \$14,075 for the support of the librarian. In addition Mr. Wilder, a short time before his death, secured a subscription of \$25,400. The entire amount received by subscription has been between \$80,000 and \$90,000. This, together with the annual fees of members, constitute the chief resources of the Society. With such slender means, with gifts of volumes and documents from individuals, the Society has made its library a valuable and attractive institution, not only to the people of this Commonwealth, but to the entire country. Pilgrims from all sections of the Union enter its doors, sit at its tables, and consult its volumes, to obtain information from its archives enriched with historic and genealogic lore, not to be found in any other institution in this Western Hemisphere.

The Society has been signally fortunate in being the recipient of the letters and papers of Gen. Henry Knox, given by his grandson, the late Rear Admiral Henry Knox Thatcher, who, during the later years of his life, took great interest in promoting the welfare of the Society.

Among the documents are letters written by Washington, Lafayette, Greene, Lincoln, Wayne, Steuben, Rufus King, and the officers of Rochambeau's army. The manuscripts number between 11,000 and 12,000, filling fifty-five massive folio volumes of priceless value.

The bound volumes of the library number between 20,000 and 30,000. No exact enumeration of the pamphlets of the Society has been made, but a conservative estimate will place them as exceeding 50,000. The Society is also in possession of a valuable collection of other manuscripts.

The meagre funds at the disposal of the Society are utterly inadequate to enable the librarian to exhibit the great value of

the historical treasures. It is to be hoped that ways and means will ere long be found to place the lore of the Society within reach of the public, that large-hearted men of ample fortune will give of their abundance to that end.

All but one of the nearly four hundred historical societies in this country have been formed during this century. The Massachusetts Historical Society was organized in the year 1791, followed by that of New York, in 1804; Maine, in 1822; New Hampshire, in 1823. It was in keeping with the genius of the period that the men who made history during the Revolution, who laid the foundation of government, and brought about a new era in human affairs, should desire to preserve the records of what had been accomplished. The formation of historical societies was a natural sequence to the founding of the Republic.

This Society was the first to collect and publish information relating to the founding of American families. Individuals had traced their descent from English ancestors during preceding decades, but not till the founding of this Society had there been any organized means for genealogical research. Indeed, there had been no great desire on the part of the people of this country to trace their connection with English ancestors. They had not wholly forgotten the bitterness of the struggle for independence, nor the later conflict between the two countries. In my boyhood the one common enemy was the hated "red-coat," the "lobster" of the days of the Revolution. The thistles by the woodside waving their red tasselled plumes, with their pricking bayonets, were regarded as fit representatives of the odious British, and we young American boys, with patriotic ardor remembering what our grandfathers accomplished at Bunker Hill and Bennington, with sticks or wooden swords charged upon the enemy and mowed down the bristling ranks.

During the early years of the century there was little pride of ancestry in the American people. As a nation we were animated by a patriotic provincialism which almost spurned an alliance with our transatlantic ancestry. By establishing a government of the people we had inaugurated a new era in political affairs, and were justly proud of what had been accomplished. The influence of the Republic of the Western Hemisphere had made itself felt among the nations of the Old World,

notably in the French Revolution. The American citizen rejoiced in his political and individual independence. He spurned monarchy, primogeniture, and entail as repugnant to republican ideas. Mediaeval ideas had been cast aside, as antagonistic to the rights and needs of a citizen of the Republic. Why, then, should he concern himself about an ancestry crumbling to dust in foreign churchyards?

During the last half of the century this intense individualism and narrow provincialism has given place to nobler ideals. To-day we revere, not only those who one hundred and twenty years ago on this 19th of April, on Lexington Common and at Concord Bridge, inaugurated a new departure in political governments by their resistance to tyranny, but we also honor our liberty-loving English ancestors who stood with Cromwell at Edgehill and Marston Moor, and those sturdy barons who compelled King John to sign his name to Magna Charta at Runnymede. We have cast aside the prejudices of former years and risen to serener heights. In these days we esteem it an honor to claim an alliance by lineage and language with the English-speaking race wherever found — a race which stands foremost in an advancing civilization. We rejoice that we are kin to a nation which has produced Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Bacon, Newton, Scott, Burns, Dickens, George Eliot, and Gladstone.

The century has, in like manner, witnessed a marvellous change of opinion in Great Britain in relation to this Republic. Until that summer morning in 1812, when the frigate "Constitution" sent the "Guerrière" to the bottom of the sea, the British regarded the "Yankee" with contempt; but the contempt was succeeded by astonishment as one after another of England's frigates lowered its flag to the Stars and Stripes. The astonishment has been changed to respect in these later years. A few years before the organization of this Society, Sidney Smith could sneeringly ask, "Who reads an American book?" To-day, in every hamlet of England you may purchase at a wayside stall volumes of Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. The Englishman in the closing decade of the century regards it as an honor to be related by kin with a people that has produced



a Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan. Since 1865 John Bull has recognized Jonathan not only as a relative by kinship, but as a brother worthy of honor and respect. To-day there is mutual regard and hearty hospitality on both sides of the Atlantic.

With this growth of respect there has come a desire on the part of many people in this country to connect themselves with their ancestry in England. Since the organization of this Society there has been a marked development of what may be termed the historic sentiment, manifest by the formation of historical societies, and notably by the publication of State, town, and family histories. Nearly every State of the Union has its State society. In this city of Boston the historic sentiment has erected tablets upon the burial-grounds of the Colonial period, and has been active in the preservation of the public buildings of that period — Faneuil Hall, the Old State House, and this edifice, the latter largely through the munificence and patriotism of Mary Hemenway of blessed memory. The writer of the Apocalypse in his ecstatic apotheosis of the righteous dead exclaimed, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for their works do follow them." Mary Hemenway has entered upon the larger life, but her works are following her, in the Old South historical lectureship repeated in Chicago, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn. Through her patriotic and historic sentiment we are assembled here to-day in this building, dedicated evermore to human freedom.

The growth of this historic sentiment is manifest also in the interest awakened throughout the country in the historic localities already named. Last summer witnessed the coming of a band of pilgrims from far distant States, to receive new inspiration by standing where Samuel Adams had stood in this edifice; to linger in Faneuil Hall, beholding the portraits of those who have done great things for their fellow-men; to gaze upon the memorials in the Old State House; to climb Bunker Hill, and hear the story of what took place there on a summer day in 1775; to visit Lexington common, where, on this April morn, one hundred and twenty years ago, the minute-men dared to confront the red-coats, and Concord, where the men of Acton, with their hair powdered by Hannah Davis, that they might

meet the British as gentlemen, marched down the hill with the men from Sudbury and Concord, keeping step to Luther Blanchard's fifing of the "White Cockade," and beneath the elms of North Bridge fired the volley whose vibration has sent kingly thrones toppling to the ground. One hundred and twenty years ago this morning Lord Percy's troops marched towards Lexington to the tune of "Yankee Doodle" played in derision of the minute-men; to-day all the nations of Europe *are marking time to that melody*. Need we wonder, then, that men and women, animated by a lofty patriotism, become pilgrims to these historic scenes? The coming summer will behold an army fifty thousand strong thronging our streets, gathering within these walls, ascending Bunker Hill, visiting Lexington and Concord. The historic sentiment in its essence must be patriotic, and the patriotic ever becomes historic. Because our fathers loved liberty above all things else, we have Lexington and Concord, and this venerable edifice, with its associations. Take away the associations, and it would only be a pile of brick and mortar given over to trade; but now, henceforth, and forever it is to be eloquent for liberty to myriads of the human race.

The growth of the historic sentiment has been manifest in a remarkable degree since the close of the War of the Rebellion, in the publication by the Government of the Union and Confederate records; the issuing of regimental and other histories; by the preservation on the part of the Government of several of the great battlefields.

In the summer of 1884 a company of ladies and gentlemen of this Commonwealth visited Gettysburg. At that time a single monument, erected by the State of Pennsylvania, together with one erected by the Government of the United States, and a tablet set up by the Second Massachusetts Regiment, were the only memorials of that conflict. A thought came to one of the visitors that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was rich enough, and should be patriotic enough, to aid each regiment and battery from this State engaged in that conflict to rear its memorial. Having been elected a member of the Legislature, his thought crystallized in the form of a resolution, appropriating five hundred dollars to each organization, which was unanimously adopted, and given validity by the

Governor. The example of this Commonwealth has been followed by all the States having troops in that battle, and to-day, Gettysburg, the turning-point of the greatest civil war of all time, is the grandest of all mausoleums, commemorating what was accomplished there for freedom.

With tender regard for those who gave their lives that this government of the people might not perish from the earth, national cemeteries have been established on all the great battle-fields. Historic sentiment has set the white marble head-stone by every grave, recording the regiment of which the fallen hero was a member. No other nation has ever rendered such honor to its heroic dead. In no other country, no other age, has there been such a union of historic and patriotic sentiment. The age is not altogether given over to material things. The flag of our country waves from many thousand school-houses; millions of boys and girls have saluted it this present week with reverent words and patriotic song.

The act of incorporation designates this as the New-England Historic Genealogical Society. The five gentlemen who organized it regarded the six States east of the Hudson as a domain sufficiently ample for historic and genealogic research. To-day the western horizon of the Society is the Pacific Ocean. With good reason the men who founded it, fifty years ago, regarded New England as sufficiently large for a society with such aims and objects as it then had in view. There was little alliance by kin with their neighbors across the Hudson. The ancestry of our people came chiefly from England; the other, largely from Holland. With equal good reason to-day the domain of the Society extends to the farthest limit of the Republic. The influence of New England upon this continent may be classified with that energy which made the Athenian state the vitalizing force in Grecian civilization, and with Judea in the Hebrew theocracy. The compact of the "Mayflower," the first bud of the new political economy in this Western world, expanding into the government of this State, has had its consummate flowering in the Constitution of the United States. Within the domain of this Commonwealth was inaugurated the revolution which brought about the new era in government. From New England they who had achieved

independence crossed the Alleghanies, to lay the foundation of a new State on the banks of the Ohio, at Marietta. From that hour to the present time the sons and daughters of New England have been establishing other States, opening windows in the forests of Michigan, speeding the plough in Illinois and Iowa, making the prairies of the West the granary of the world.

The genius of New England has manifested itself in establishing public schools, academies, colleges, churches, charitable and benevolent associations. It was a missionary to the Oregon Indians, the Rev. Marcus Whitman, who, in his patriotic zeal, made the mid-winter journey from Walla-Walla to Washington, suffering terrible hardship, who saved Oregon and Washington to the Republic. It was the sailors of the New England maritime towns of Cape Cod and Cape Ann who manned the ships that bore the gold-seekers around Cape Horn to the Eldorado of the Pacific slope in '49 — sailors who abandoned the sea, became citizens, and made California a free State of the Union.

From this old Commonwealth went forth the resolute men who gave freedom to Kansas, and sounded the death-knell of slavery. Historians in these later years have recognized the energizing influence of New England in the civilization of the nation. It is the aim, therefore, of this Society to gather up whatever will illuminate the history of this force which has given such vitality to the civilization of the Republic. It is to be hoped that large means will be forthcoming to enable the Society to secure all histories of States, towns, families, and individuals; that within its doors, those making historic and genealogical research shall be able to obtain all possible information.

It has been the aim of this Society not only to collect but to diffuse information. Since Jan. 1, 1847, every three months, the "New-England Historical and Genealogical Register" has been published. Its forty-eight volumes, replete with historical, genealogical, and biographical data, are of inestimable value. Coming generations will turn to them as a miser to his hoard of gold, as a bibliomaniac to an illuminated missal of the mediæval ages. The Society has been singularly fortunate

in its editors. Among these I have but to mention the names of Samuel G. Drake, John Ward Dean, and Albert H. Hoyt. The first named has passed on to the great majority, but his works remain. He needs no other monument than his works, which are to be found in every historical library of the land. Mr. Dean still continues hale, vigorous, *fourscore years young*, every day bestowing full information to ardent inquirers. Each returning three months the world is made richer by his contributions. Mr. Hoyt is still active as chairman of the Committee on Publications.

For more than half a century the Rev. Lucius R. Paige, D.D., has been an honored member of this organization. In behalf of this Society, I extend to Mr. Dean and to Dr. Paige its hearty congratulations, with the hope that their lives may still be rounded with many years.

History is a record of events; in its largest sense, it is the philosophy of human action. From the days of Herodotus to the present century historians were mainly content to chronicle events; in contrast, the historian of to-day traces events to their antecedent causes, seeks to discern their meaning, and uses them as a horoscope of the future. No longer is the muse of history a mere analyst, but she stands as a white-robed prophet, forecasting human destiny.

The half-century that has passed since the formation of this Society has been distinguished by great changes in political and civil affairs. Not the least of the notable events has been the extension of the domain comprising the present Republic. During the winter of 1844-5, while Charles Ewer, Samuel Gardner Drake, John Wingate Thornton, Lemuel Shattuck, and William Henry Montague were organizing this Society, the Congress of the United States was discussing the question of the annexation of Texas, which had revolted from Mexico and established its independence. On March 1, 1845, the annexation, so far as the United States was concerned, was accomplished by the signature of President Tyler. The act was ratified by Texas the following July, and was quickly followed by the advance of the United States troops to the Rio Grande.

Momentous events have come from these acts, — the war with Mexico, and the acquisition by the United States of a vast

region of territory. The impelling force was the determination of a slave oligarchy to perpetuate its political power. But He who guides the nations to their destiny had His own plans for the future of this Western world. From the days of Hernando Cortez, California had slumbered under Spanish and Mexican inertia; but the Stars and Stripes were waving on the banks of the Sacramento on January 19, 1848, when James W. Marshall, digging a mill-race for James A. Sutter, first beheld shining particles in the sandy soil and wondered what the "stuff" might be. In the divine plan that shovelful of earth was an all-important agent to give direction to human affairs. With it began the struggle between Freedom and Slavery for supremacy in the affairs of the nation. For threescore years, from the adoption of the Constitution in 1787, by which slaves were counted in the basis for representation, the slaveholders had controlled the Government. With that shovelful of earth began the upsetting of their plan, and the unfolding of the divine plan for the welfare of the human race. Little did James W. Marshall comprehend what would come from those shining particles of yellow sand — a rush of emigrants from all lands; the rising of a great city; a railroad across Darien, others across the continent; a new departure in finance throughout the world; the greatest civil war of all the ages; Gettysburg and Appomattox; freedom and citizenship for four millions of slaves; the redemption of the Republic; a new civilization.

A half-century ago, Mexico, though our near neighbor geographically, in everything else was far away. The commercial relations between the United States and that country were of little account. Though nominally a republic it had no stable government; military adventurers became despots — revolution succeeding revolution. From the day of its subjugation by Cortez, the ecclesiastical power, under the law of mortmain, the hand which grasped the property of dying men, had appropriated to itself by far the most valuable portion of the real estate of that country. Being the property of the Church, it paid no taxes. The burden of taxation was crushing out the life of the nation; there could be no progress to a people held in subjection by an ecclesiasticism that appropriated to itself nearly all the revenues of the country. Buena Vista,



Chapultepec, the entrance of the troops of the United States into the city of Mexico, the loss of nearly one-half of its domains, were humiliating events; but out of that humiliation came the resurrection of a new republic, the subsequent sequestration of the estates of the clergy, a new constitution, the beginning of a reformed church, war between the clericals and patriots. Juarez was declared constitutional President in 1858, while Miramon was made President by the Church junto. In consequence of the latter seizing six hundred thousand dollars set aside to pay interest on bonds held in Europe, and in order to establish a stable government, England, France, and Spain united in sending an expedition to Vera Cruz.

The flag of this country had just been humiliated at Sumter, and the Southern Confederacy established. The London "Times" newspaper voiced the sentiment of all the adherents of monarchical institutions when it said that the Great Republic had ceased to exist. From its establishment in 1787, crowned heads the world over had deprecated the existence of this government of the people, and its influence upon other nations. Great Britain with indecent haste, before Charles Francis Adams, newly appointed Minister to that country, could cross the Atlantic, had recognized the Confederates as belligerents, and British merchants were supplying them with arms and munitions of war. The ruling and mercantile classes of that nation, almost without exception, gave their sympathies to the Confederacy.

With the humiliation of the Stars and Stripes at Sumter, with the landing of French troops at Vera Cruz, the dream of empire came to Louis Napoleon, Emperor of the French, who regarded himself as a man of destiny, chosen by divine Providence to reëstablish Latin supremacy in this Western Hemisphere.

It is not probable that the historian of the future will ever be able to set forth all the agencies brought into play in the attempt to carry out the Napoleonic idea. This much, however, is known, that Miramon, the exiled president of the church party in Mexico, by the gift of several millions in bonds to Jecker, a banker in Switzerland, and by the gift of several other millions to De Morny, half-brother to Napoleon III., by the influence of the Archbishop of Mexico with the head of the Church in Rome,

to recover the confiscated estates, by awakening the ambition of Maximilian of Austria, as a true son of the Church, and of Carlotta and Eugénie, as devoted daughters of the Church, all unitedly encouraging the emperor to make his dream a reality, Maximilian was seated upon the throne of the Montezumas. On June 10, 1863, the soldiers of France, under Bazaine, entered the city of Mexico.

In the United States the battle of Antietam had been succeeded by the slaughter of Fredericksburg and the disaster at Chancellorsville. The British-built Confederate cruiser "Alabama" was lighting the ocean with the flames of merchant vessels belonging to the Northern States. A great Confederate army was marching down the Shenandoah valley to invade Pennsylvania, seize Washington, float the stars and bars above the dome of the national capitol, and carry their victorious flag to the city of New York. Throughout the North a great political party was demanding peace at any price, and Abraham Lincoln was being denounced as a blood-thirsty tyrant for having issued a proclamation giving freedom to four million slaves. Upon the other side of the Atlantic Mr. Roebuck, member of Parliament, was in Paris in conference with the emperor to bring about united recognition of the Confederacy, and by that act crush the United States. Lord Palmerston, the premier, determined, however, to wait a little till the Confederates had won a victory on Northern soil. The news came of Gettysburg, and that the Confederacy had been cut in twain by Grant at Vicksburg. Thenceforth there could be no more conferences between Mason and Lord John Russell, Slidell and Louis Napoleon. A few months later came Appomattox, then the movement of an army under General Sheridan to the banks of the Rio Grande, the firm and courteous letter of Secretary Seward, and the withdrawal of the troops of France from Mexico. So the dream of empire faded away. Then was heard that volley of musketry at Orizaba, where Maximilian met his fate. Four years passed; then came Sedan and the gleam of the spiked helmet in Paris, the burning of the Tuileries, and out of its ashes the rising of the new Republic of France. To-day, Carlotta in a mad-house and Eugénie in her habiliments of mourning are all that remain of the Napoleonic dream.



To-day, Mexico is our near neighbor, feeling the thrill of a new life through its political and commercial relations with this republic.

The half-century has also witnessed another notable event in this Western Hemisphere — the overthrow of monarchy in Brazil, and the establishment of a government of the people.

There have been great changes in other lands. Fifty years ago the civilized world at times was reminded that in the far Orient a nation was living by itself alone, holding no communication with the great majority of the human race — a people who hated Christian civilization. The geography of my boyhood pictured a procession of Japanese trampling upon a cross, the emblem of Western civilization. Once a year a vessel bearing the flag of Holland was allowed to drop anchor in one of its seaports, but no foreigner was permitted to set foot upon the soil of the hermit nation; no Japanese could leave the empire to visit other lands. It was reserved to the United States, not by force of arms, but by persistent firmness and kindness, to open the gates of the empire to the influences of Western civilization. To-day Japan is the radiant queen of the Orient.

In the historic evolution we see the sailor-citizens of Nantucket factors in this dramatic resurrection of a nation from a dead past to a new and vigorous life. It was in 1791, four years after the adoption of the Constitution, which made the United States a homogeneous political body, that a Nantucket sea-captain, searching for the sperm whale, doubled Cape Horn and began to reap the harvest of the Pacific. The sea-captains of that island became explorers and discoverers, searching every nook and corner, bay and harbor, from the Arctic to Antarctic seas. Some of the vessels, doubling Cape Horn, never returned, but suffered shipwreck on the sunken rocks off the Japanese coasts. The crews, escaping to the shore, were regarded as invaders and hustled to prison to die a lingering death, or, if by chance surviving hardship, were given over to a Dutch shipmaster, through whose kindness they might be taken to Batavia and from thence enabled to reach home.

Possibly we may never know who first conceived the idea of compelling Japan to give asylum to shipwrecked seamen.

It seems probable that the great movement of emigrants in 1849, and the unparalleled development of California, led Daniel Webster, Secretary of State under President Fillmore, to ponder the future of this Republic in its relation to the Orient, and take measures for fitting out an expedition which subsequently sailed under Commodore Perry. From the close of the Revolution the ships of Boston and Salem had been doubling the Cape of Good Hope, freighted with tea from Canton and silk from Nanking. Commerce with China and Manila was increasing. It was seen that the rise of a new State on the Pacific shore must inevitably lead to a great increase of trade in that direction. Commercial relations rather than any purely philanthropic motive doubtless animated the Government in sending out ship-loads of the industrial products of this country as gifts to the long-slumbering nation. The outcome of that expedition is without a parallel in human history.

From the records of all time there will not be found another such resurrection as that of the Empire of Japan from a dead past to its present vigorous national life. To-day, China with its four hundred millions of people bows at the feet of the young queen of the Orient. Beyond any other nation this Republic has been influential in giving direction to the course of civilization in the Mikado's empire. It seems probable that in the near future there must be some momentous change in China; that the enlightened men of that country must see that railroads, telegraphs, and the printing-press—that the living forces of Occidental civilization are more potent than generations of dead ancestors to promote the well-being of a nation. China to-day is chained to a dead past, worshipping the virtues of ancestors slumbering in the multitudinous graveyards dotting the vast empire. No railroads thread its valleys giving vitality to commerce. The lumbering junk, with its bamboo lateen sail, is an appropriate emblem of the long-slumbering empire. In Japan the whistle of the locomotive awakens the echoes of the matchless mountain Fujiama, piercing the sky with its ethereal whiteness. The locomotive, the printing-press, the public school, have given new life and power to the nation. With such an example at her doors, China must of

necessity cast off the ceremonies of the dead past and rise to a new national life.

Let us not forget that it was a son of Massachusetts who, since the formation of this Society, was appointed Minister to China — Anson Burlingame. Being impressed with the future possible greatness of that ancient land of Sinim, he resigned his American citizenship, and became an official of the empire, that he might more effectually wield his influence in giving direction to its future civilization, predicting that the time would come when the emblem of Western civilization — the shining cross — would be reared in its valleys and upon its verdure-crowned hills. Should such be the ultimate outcome, the future historian will trace the advancement back to that peaceful mission of the war-ships of this Republic under Commander Perry to the secluded nation of the Orient, to-day taking its position in the ranks of the most favored nations.

The half-century that has elapsed since the formation of this Society has witnessed a great change among the nations of Europe — the political unification of people speaking a common language. From 1815, after Napoleon I. became an exile to St. Helena, to 1859, the people speaking the Italian language were divided into a half-dozen petty kingdoms, ruled by Bourbons dominated by reactionary ideas. Then came the great men of modern Italian history — Victor Emmanuel, Mazzini, Cavour, Garibaldi; the tumbling of puppets from their thrones; separation of Church and State; the rise of the people and the unification of the nation. Equally notable has been the coming together of the German-speaking people under the leadership of Bismarck.

In no other age has there been such an advancement in applied science as during the half-century since the formation of this Society. In 1844, railways extended from Boston eastward to Portland; northward to Concord, N.H.; westward to Buffalo. In the transmission of information, the first electric telegraph had just been constructed between Washington and Baltimore. To-day the world is belted with railways, and all lands are united by the telegraph. Scarcely twenty years have elapsed since the invention of the telephone, and now, though our friends may be one thousand miles away, we converse with them as familiarly as if they were by our side.

One of the most notable changes of the half-century is that which has come to the female sex, in education, occupation, influence, and power. In the years preceding the present century the sentiment of the world, if not actively opposed to the education of woman, certainly did not favor her acquisition of intellectual attainments. The public school was for boys and not for girls. Diligent research fails to discover a single instance of the attendance of girls in a public school prior to the beginning of the present century. Abigail and Hannah Adams, Dorothy Quincy, and their associates, the favored few of the Revolutionary period, were taught reading, arithmetic, and their accidence by the parish minister, or some tutor in the family home. The proposition to admit girls to the public school, like many other things, was strenuously opposed as an uncalled for and dangerous innovation detrimental to public morals.

The second decade of the century witnessed the beginning of Sunday-schools. The proposition to gather the children of the parish in a school on Sunday, even to recite verses from the Bible and the hymns of Dr. Watts, was received with much shaking of heads by those who regarded themselves as conservators of the moral and religious welfare of the community.

A reverend doctor of divinity in one of the suburbs of this city, in giving notice of a meeting to be addressed by a woman, informed his congregation that if they cared to hear a hen crow they could do so by assembling at half-past seven.

In the historic evolution of the human race, the flashing of that cannon on Morris island on the morning of April 12, 1861, was not only the signal for the uprising of the people to preserve this government, but it was the beginning of a new era in the lives of the women of this country.

The patriotic fervor of the mothers and daughters during the War of the Rebellion was as conspicuous as that of the fathers and sons. Brave and resolute were the white-robed angels of the hospital. To-day woman is not only the housekeeper, but the trained nurse, the accountant, typewriter, cashier, saleswoman, director of public institutions, teacher of nine-tenths of the pupils in the public schools, professor in the university, president of the college, doctor of medicine, doctor in philosophy, of law, of divinity, practising at the bar, preaching

from the pulpit, legislator, mayor, manager of commercial affairs, supervisor of streets, *and is still the lady!*

The passing years of the half-century have witnessed a marvellous development of ways and means designed to promote the welfare of the human race, such as the formation of associations, societies, and organizations, humane, benevolent, charitable, educational, and historic, which are based on one great, fundamental idea, that of brotherhood. In no other period have men understood as they now understand that no man liveth to himself alone. In no other age have they comprehended as they now comprehend that they are under obligations to their fellow-men; that the highest happiness is attainable only by bringing into sociology the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount. More clearly than in any former period do men understand that the enduring monument to their memory is not the marble that may be erected above their mouldering forms, but rather the benefaction that promotes the welfare of those who may come after them. Men who have accumulated large possessions of material things are beginning to comprehend that it is not creditable for them to pass from this life without bestowing a portion of their estate for a hospital to relieve human suffering, for a library, school, or college to advance learning, or some endowment that shall be a blessing to coming generations.

The historian of the future who may write of the century now closing will have abundant material for philosophic treatment. History in the past has been in a large degree what kings and potentates have done; history in this century is an account of what the people have accomplished. Our perspective on this Patriot's Day, in this historic edifice, includes the figures of Samuel Adams, Joseph Warren, and their compatriots of the Revolutionary period. The perspective of him who fifty years hence may stand where I am standing, and address the members of this Society, will include the figures of Webster, Everett, Choate, Winthrop, Sumner, Wilson, of this Commonwealth, as moulding and shaping the Republic for Union and Liberty. To the historian of the future, in literature, the stars of the Elizabethan age will not surpass in lustre Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, and Holmes. A

procession of stately figures will move across the field of his vision in this Republic, including Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Farragut; upon the other side of the Atlantic not the figures which sit on thrones, but the uncrowned Gladstone, Bismarck, and Cavour.

The philosophic historian of the future will note that during the half-century now closing the principle of arbitration has risen like a guiding star upon the nations, and is rapidly becoming an illuminating force in international affairs. A third of a century ago, one million men in arms were marshalled to uphold this government of the people; that end accomplished, the mighty armies melted away as the dew before the rising sun, and the Republic, by its example, stands to-day before all the world as the personification of peace. Science and invention, by making weapons of war destructive of life almost to the annihilation of armies, have become the allies of the Prince of Peace.

International exhibitions, parliaments of religions, applied science, commercial unity, all are working to a common end,—the universal welfare. Abraham Lincoln in his second inaugural uttering the words “with malice towards none, but charity for all,” voiced the growing sentiment of the age.

Never in the past as to-day has the human race been so united in bonds of unity and brotherhood. Never before has the world's sentiment been marshalled as now in behalf of humanity. In no other age has there been such a reaching down to recover that which we had deemed as lost. Notwithstanding Europe to-day is a vast military camp with millions of men in armies, the spirit of the age is for peace. The Hebrew prophets foretold the time when the sword shall become a ploughshare. The poetic seers of the last half-century voice the growing sentiment of the hour. Longfellow in the “Arsenal at Springfield” hears the music of the coming ages:

Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals  
The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!  
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,  
The holy melodies of love arise.



Whittier, contemplating the course of nature beside the winding Merrimack, discerns that "life is ever lord of death," and Tennyson, penning the last lines of "In Memoriam," and looking out upon the ever restless ocean, pictures the great event of the coming centuries :

One God, one law, one element,  
And one far-off divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves.

It is a historical fact that the world to-day is animated as never before by the song first heard on earth, above the green pastures of Bethlehem. Notwithstanding the iniquity of the age, the world is vastly better at this moment than it was when Charles Ewer and Wingate Thornton and their associates founded this Society. The historic revolution of the past indicates that it will be better to-morrow than it is to-day. The teachings of history are in accordance with the analogy of nature. On this spring morning the mayflower is exhaling its fragrance upon the hitherto uncongenial April air; the lily will ere long unfold its golden petals upon the present ice-bound lake. From the first primordial cell to imperial man, wearing the likeness of the Creator, the evolution has been from lower to higher forms. The voice of nature, of prophecy, and history are in accordance with the longings of the world for the coming of a time when there shall be a consummate flowering of the human race. Grant, if you please, that this is optimistic; but it is the optimism of history. During the eighteen hundred years that have passed since the Man of Nazareth in this month of April rose victor from the grave, triumphant over death, the banner of progress has borne this inscription:

*The Brotherhood of man ; the Redemption of the world !*

## P O E M .

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BY OLIVER B. STEBBINS, ESQ.

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## OUR MISSION.

There is a realm unknown to mortal ken,  
Unsung by poets and unseen by men,  
So vast no region could enclose its space,  
No country compass it, no power efface.  
More populous by far than Earth's great states,  
Its bounds the world, to Earth's remotest gates.  
Within its vast expanse its people lie  
Safe from the storms of Life's adversity.  
Quietly resting in their boundless bed  
They occupy this Empire of the Dead.

But though to living eyes this realm unknown,  
This hidden mystery may not be shown,  
The thoughts while living, actions manifold  
Of those that dwell within may yet be told.  
The silent witnesses of an age long past  
May speak in papers, may show forth at last  
Upon recorded documents their deeds,  
And grow the clearer as the time proceeds.  
To aid this work and make the public see  
Ancestral facts as they were wont to be,  
This is the plan of our society.

What changes since our record first began,  
What innovations in the life of man  
Science and art have made. So vast the field,  
Space would forbid me to relate the yield  
Of knowledge, wisdom, and increased resource,  
In the half-century's exciting course.

Transport your minds to fifty years ago,  
When search was difficult and progress slow.  
See Thornton, Montagne, Shattuck, Ewer, and Drake,  
Who on the records our first laurels make.  
Then Andrew, Whiting, Wilder, Dorus Clarke,  
Here in our councils made distinguished mark.



Here Winthrop sat, whose mild and pleasant face  
And stately mien lent dignity and grace  
To our assembly. Here there also dwelt  
One who—excuse me—made his presence Felt.  
Here Paige and Slafter, Trask, and Hoyt, and Dean,  
All with us yet, time's changes here have seen  
Since the first years. Other brave workers too  
Their labors gave, the interest to renew;  
But time forbids their many names to mention;  
Honored they are, and worthy your attention.  
May their successors prove, by constant zeal,  
Worthy the fame the founder's acts reveal.

To rescue facts from Time's destroying tooth;  
Correct false statements and bring out the truth;  
All doubtful issues to investigate,  
And bring the facts out, ere it be too late,  
Of local history. Off the family tree  
To prune the erroneous branches, and to free  
From all misstatement each tradition wrong;  
Strengthen weak points, make certain records strong—  
This is our mission. And for fifty years,  
Through Fortune's smiles or frowns, through doubts and fears,  
Our work has progressed until now, when we  
Welcome you, friends, to this, our Jubilee.  
To you we look for kindness and support;  
Your aid we seek and your assistance court.  
With your approval duty grows less hard;  
Cheered by your smiles and warmed by your regard  
We still go on, and are, by your applause,  
More conscious of the justice of our cause.

## ADDRESS OF HON. GEORGE F. HOAR, LL.D.

I believe, Mr. President, it was Lord Brougham — no, it was Lord Lyndhurst — who said that Campbell's Lives added a new terror to death. This unexpected call adds a new terror to old age. It did not occur to me that I should be expected to say anything here to-day. But I am happy, in the absence of President Salisbury, the distinguished head of the American Antiquarian Society, to bring its greetings. I have been but a delinquent member of the Historic Genealogical Society. It has never been in my power before to attend a meeting. But I have read the "Register" from the beginning. I have no doubt of the value of the studies to which your members devote themselves. Your name expresses two purposes. One is historic investigation. The other is tracing the descent of families and individuals from their ancestors. Both are useful and needful.

The chief function of this Society is to preserve and make clear the history of New England as it bears upon the life of the Republic. I suppose that to-day more than one-third of the people who live in this country are men and women who have no connection, either of kinship or sympathy, with the old England from which our ancestors came. The glory of English achievement is not their glory. They look to other ancestry and lineage. They have other ideals and another pride. This proportion is growing larger and larger every day. Yet you and I mean to affirm and to hold fast to the fact that this country will cling to the traditions of English liberty and English law as they were brought over and handed down to us by the men who settled New England. Governor Stoughton said that "God sifted a whole nation that he might send choice grain over into this wilderness." The United States, all of them that are and all of them that will be, shall forever and forever be the product of that seed. Your function and that of your fellow-societies, is to preserve and to make known to the youth of the land the beauty and majesty of that history.

We sometimes smile at the labors of the genealogist. It sometimes seems as if he tried to persuade himself that he was engaged in an intellectual occupation while he is giving his life to the lightest and the most worthless of all trifling. There may seem to be a certain absurdity in looking up the history of the twenty-two million ancestors, which it is said each of us may claim since the time of William the Conqueror. But I believe these labors are to furnish a great aid to science in ascertaining the important law of heredity.

This life of ours is determined by two independent forces. We study the law of evolution. We study the rising of this race of ours from the animal to the human, from the vegetable to the animal, from the dead, inorganic matter to the vegetable. As we reluctantly confess that we have risen from the grass to the monkey, and from the monkey to the man, it seems as if our whole existence on this earth were a pitiful failure. It seems as if this new science in destroying the framework and setting in which imagination has painted to us the beauty and the glory of the great doctrine of Immortality, had destroyed everything in which we can find comfort, either in memory or in hope.

Then comes in our genealogist, who, in giving us the list of our progenitors, shows to us the almost irresistible bias which seems enough to overcome the will and make the individual's moral quality inevitable and fatal, and banish the elements of freedom and choice from human history and human destiny.

But then comes into view another truth, which the historian and the genealogist marries to the truth of which I have spoken. Outside of this force, there is a force which science cannot explain or understand—the spiritual side of man. Beside the pedigree of the physical and animal life there is the pedigree of the spirit. We like to find it as we trace the descent of the youth of 1861, from the men and women of the Revolution, or the men and women of the great Puritan days in the inheritance of lineage and blood. But it is not confined to that inheritance. What has modern science to tell us of these forces, which burst the limitations of race, which break the chains of habit, and are more powerful than the inherited physical and moral forces of all the generations? Tell me, Mr.

Darwin, why is it that every man and woman in this audience would rather die than to have his neighbors believe he has done a base action, even if he will never suffer physically an atom thereby? Explain the patriotism of the men who fell at Concord on this anniversary we celebrate to-day? Did the spirits of those who fell at Marathon and Thermopylæ whisper to their spirits? Has your doctrine anything to tell us about that?

Do you know that with the bias which came to you, or to me, from your ancestor, or mine, there came also a potent force speaking from the souls of the heroes of old? The genealogist is to tell us something about this. From what mother or father came the greatness of Webster and Sumner? From what fatherhood and motherhood came the virtues that adorned those lives? When you have answered these things, you have solved the great problem of life. They have just dug up, in some of their researches in Greece, the bodies of three hundred and ninety Greek youths who fell in the battle of Chæronæa, where the power of the democracy went down, whose fateful news cost the life of the aged Isocrates —

“That dishonest victory  
At Chæronæa, fatal to Liberty,  
Killed with report that old man eloquent.”

They found the bodies of these youths buried side by side, with their rings and chains about them, adorned as for a banquet. Judging from the formation of the bones, every one of them was under twenty-five years old. They found the broken ribs and the marks of the sword-thrust, or spear-thrust. What was it — perhaps the men who fought upon the 19th of April could have told us — what was it that led these youths to go as cheerfully to their deaths as to their marriage feasts? There is something in this about which science has not yet told us.

There is something in this which did not come to us from the grass or the mollusk or the monkey. I hope the scholars of this Society will not forget it. It is the bond which holds this country of ours together. Patriotism, love of home, love of woman, love of honor, love of justice. These are the things of which the 19th of April is the perpetual witness, and of which the mere student of the physical side of man's nature has nothing to say.

## ADDRESS OF CURTIS GUILD, ESQ.,

President of the Bostonian Society.

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I congratulate you, Mr. President, in behalf of the Society which I have the honor to represent, upon the success of your time-honored institution, and am glad to participate in the celebration of your fiftieth anniversary.

I need not dilate upon the importance of preserving historical records correctly. There is work to do in the preservation of correct records of the history that we are now making every day, as well as in the correction of errors and the supplying omissions in past records. The difficulties in supplying inaccuracies or omissions in the early history of the country that are encountered by the historian of to-day, should prompt him to leave behind a clear and correct record for those who are to succeed him in future generations.

The great advantage that this Society has been to the community in the preservation of valuable historic records of our early colonial history and the genealogy of families, is patent to us all, and has been of the greatest value to historian, student, and scholar. Its value has become more appreciated by the general public as the country has increased in years. All honor, sir, to the founders of this Society, and to others of its members whose names you have referred to as diligent workers in its ranks.

It is especially appropriate that this anniversary should be celebrated in this edifice hallowed by associations of the American Revolution. Here through this window came Warren to deliver his address; there, in that balcony, once stood General Washington; and here while citizens were listening to patriotic words, they heard the shouts of the "Mohawks," as the disguised citizens called themselves, on their way to throw the tea into Boston Harbor; opposite stood the house in which Franklin was born; but a short distance away, at the head of State street,

stands the old State House, whose walls have resounded with the voices of Otis, and Adams, and Hancock, and where independence was born. From its balcony the Declaration of Independence was read; from its windows Washington reviewed the troops as they marched into Boston. State street was the scene of the Boston Massacre. In fact, old Boston is the very Mecca of the early historical scenes preceding and during the American Revolution.

This history belongs not to us alone in Boston, but to the whole American nation. It should be the recognized duty of associations like ours to see that these events which are so important in the history of our country, and the deeds of those who sacrificed so much to establish this Republic, should be kept fresh and green in the memory of the present generation, and transmitted for preservation to those who are to succeed us.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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[From the Hon. Frederick Thomas Greenhalge, Governor of Massachusetts.]

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, BOSTON, April 2, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.:*

DEAR SIR: The Governor is in receipt of your invitation to attend the fiftieth anniversary of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society at the Old South Meeting-house, 19th April next; and the Governor directs me to state that it would give him pleasure to attend, but he has already accepted an invitation to deliver an address at Acton in the forenoon of the same day, and is obliged to send his regrets.

Yours truly,

W. A. THOMAS,  
*Private Secretary.*

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[From the Hon. Roger Wolcott, LL.B., Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts, and a member of the Society.]

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, BOSTON, April 17, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.:*

MY DEAR SIR: Although I am steadily regaining my strength from my recent attack of pneumonia, I do not yet venture to accept any engagements of a public character. Otherwise I should certainly hope to attend the services on the 19th.

With thanks and regards,

I am very truly yours,

ROGER WOLCOTT.

[From the Hon. George von Lengerke Meyer, Esq., Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives.]

SPEAKER'S ROOM, STATE HOUSE,  
BOSTON, 18th April, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

MY DEAR CAPTAIN FOLSOM: I expected to attend the meeting of your Society on the 19th, it being a holiday, but am obliged to go to New York this afternoon. Regretting this,

I am yours,  
G. V. L. MEYER.

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[From the Hon. William M. Olin, Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.]

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,  
BOSTON, April 3, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

DEAR CAPTAIN: I am very sorry that having accepted an invitation for the 19th, at Acton, I cannot attend the fiftieth anniversary of the formation of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society, at the Old South Meeting-house, in accordance with your invitation.

Please accept my thanks for your courtesy, and believe me,

Always sincerely yours,  
WM. M. OLIN.

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[From the Hon. D. Russell Brown, Governor of Rhode Island.]

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND,  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, PROVIDENCE, April 15, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

DEAR SIR: I am directed by Governor Brown to acknowledge the courtesy of your invitation to attend the fiftieth anniversary of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society, and to express his regret that his public engagements will not permit of his being present.

Yours respectfully,  
R. W. JENNINGS,  
*Executive Secretary.*



[From the Hon. Edward Upton Curtis, Mayor of the City of Boston.]

MAYOR'S OFFICE, CITY HALL,  
BOSTON, 28th March, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

DEAR SIR: His Honor the Mayor has received the cordial invitation to attend the fiftieth anniversary meeting of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society; and he regrets that his official duties will make it impossible for him to accept.

Yours very truly,

COURTNEY GUILD,  
*Mayor's Secretary.*

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[From the Hon. Winslow Warren, Collector of the Port of Boston.]

CUSTOM HOUSE, OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR,  
BOSTON, April 9, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

DEAR SIR: I regret very much that other engagements, April 19, will prevent my acceptance of your kind invitation for that day. It would give me great pleasure to join with you in what will doubtless prove a very interesting occasion.

I am very truly yours,

WINSLOW WARREN.

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[From the Rev. Lucius Robinson Paige, D.D., the first elected member of the Society, and the oldest living member.]

CAMBRIDGEPORT, April 17, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

DEAR SIR: I cordially thank you for inviting me to attend the approaching anniversary of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society.

As I was the first person elected to membership after its organization, it would afford me peculiar pleasure to accept your invitation; but the infirmities of age press so heavily that I dare not encounter so great fatigue.

With sincere wishes for the continued prosperity of the Society, with which I have been so pleasantly associated, and from which I have received so many favors for more than half a century,

I am truly yours,

LUCIUS R. PAIGE.

[From the Hon. George Sewall Boutwell, LL.D., Ex-Governor of Massachusetts, Ex-Senator of the United States, Ex-Secretary of the Treasury, and a member of the Society.]

WASHINGTON, D.C., 23d March, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

MY DEAR SIR: Except for the circumstance that I have accepted the invitation of the town of Acton to be present at their anniversary exercises of the 19th of April, I should, with great pleasure, accept your invitation in behalf of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society.

Very truly,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL.

[From Charles Francis Adams, LL.D., President of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and a member of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society.]

ADAMS BUILDING, 23 COURT STREET,  
BOSTON, April 18, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

MY DEAR CAPTAIN FOLSOM: It had been my intention to be present at the meeting of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society to-morrow, both as a member of that Society and as representing the Massachusetts Historical Society.

I regret extremely to say that, at the last moment, I am called out of town to Newport, and I shall have to go early in the morning, not getting back until in the evening.

Under these circumstances I regret extremely my enforced absence. Will you be so good as to explain the reason of it to Ex-Governor Claflin and other members of the Society.

I remain, etc.,

CHARLES F. ADAMS.

[From the Hon. Henry Cabot Lodge, Senator of the United States, and a member of the Society.]

UNITED STATES SENATE,  
WASHINGTON, D.C., March 28, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

MY DEAR SIR: I have received your invitation to attend the celebration of the semi-centennial of the Society in Boston on the 19th of April, and am very sorry to say that I shall not be at home at that time.

Very truly yours,

H. C. LODGE.

[From the Hon. John [Forrester] Andrew, LL.B., Ex-Member of Congress, and a member of the Society.]

32 HEREFORD STREET, BOSTON, March 27, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

DEAR SIR: I thank you very much for the invitation to the services to be held at the Old South Meeting-house on April 19, and it will give me pleasure to be present on that occasion.

Very truly yours,

JOHN F. ANDREW.

[From James Junius Goodman, Esq., Vice-President of the Connecticut Historical Society, and a member of the Society.]

45 WEST 34TH STREET, NEW YORK, April 11, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

DEAR SIR: I regret exceedingly that I am unable to accept your committee's very cordial invitation to be present at the fiftieth anniversary of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society on the 19th inst. An engagement on that day prevents me.

I am sure it will be an interesting occasion, and I hope it may serve as a means to increase the vigor of the Society and the enthusiasm of its members in its work.

Yours sincerely,

JAMES J. GOODWIN.

[From the Rev. Edward Everett Hale, D.D., a member of the Society.]

39 HIGHLAND STREET, ROXBURY, MASS.,

April 2, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

MY DEAR MR. FOLSOM: At this moment I fear that I shall not be able to be at the Old South Meeting-house on the day of the battle at Lexington. If I can come I will, but I shall not be able to unless I have freed myself from some engagements.

Truly yours,

EDWARD E. HALE.

[From Mrs. Andrew Bigelow, daughter of the Hon. Marshall Pinckney Wilder, LL.D., formerly President of the Society.]

SOUTHBORO', MASS., April 16, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

DEAR SIR: I regret exceedingly that my convalescence prevents my accepting your polite invitation to be present in person at the

fiftieth anniversary of the Society of which my honored father was an active officer for twenty years.

Please accept my congratulations that those members who were co-laborers with him, and others since enlisted, are accomplishing so much, not only to hold the interest of the community of to-day, but to perpetuate for generations to come the main objects of the Society — "*In Memoriam Majorum.*"

Very respectfully,

MRS. ANDREW BIGELOW.

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[From the Rev. Edward A. Rand, A.M., President of the Watertown, Mass., Historical Society.]

WATERTOWN, April 18, 1895.

CAPT. A. A. FOLSOM, *Chairman Committee, etc.* :

MY DEAR CAPTAIN FOLSOM: Many thanks for invitation to the anniversary of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society. I hope to be present. The Watertown Society through me, I know, would like to send its congratulations on the excellent work done, and many wishes for a future still more abundant in usefulness. Yours has been a grand work.

Heartily yours,

EDWARD A. RAND.

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[Telegram received at the Old South Meeting-house from the Hon. Joseph Williamson, A.M., for eleven years Vice-President of the Society for the State of Maine.]

BELFAST, ME., April 19, 1895.

Regret that professional engagements detain me from the anniversary to-day.

JOSEPH WILLIAMSON.







